

fiscal year, the division handled 245,538 incoming telephone calls. Incoming telephone calls are managed by an automated call distribution system. The division assisted 13,390 taxpayers who came to the Walk-In Assistance Area in our Central Office location. The division also answered 52,623 pieces of incoming written correspondence received from taxpayers and over 13,496 e-mail inquiries.

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## MOTOR CARRIER SERVICES DIVISION

The Motor Carrier Services Division implemented the first piece of an Oracle object relational database. The new system elements are being phased in and replacing legacy systems in a non-obtrusive manner. The program to provide proportional fuel use tax credits is in place. Next, our Business Authorization System was implemented and is now operational. Another element, commercial vehicle registrations and plating via the International Registration Plan (IRP), is in place and being tested.

The newly legislated Commercial Vehicle Excise Tax was incorporated into our new system development and is also operational, providing a tax replacement to local municipalities for former personal property taxes.

We also implemented staggered registration periods for IRP carriers, allowing the annual work flow to be spread out over the year rather than during one month a year. This will improve both operational services and our levels of customer service.

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## TAXPAYER ADVOCATE OFFICE/PUBLIC AFFAIRS

For the first time ever, the Indiana Department of Revenue printed its IT-40 Individual Income Tax Booklet in Spanish for Indiana's rapidly-growing Hispanic and Latino population. The Public Affairs and Taxpayer Advocate Office rose to the challenge of a sharply increased need for Spanish translations -- of tax requirements, returns and new business inquiries.

### ***Taxpayer Advocate Office***

It is the responsibility of the Taxpayer Advocate Office to ensure all Indiana taxpayers are treated fairly and to resolve recurring problems and complaints in which taxpayers' previous attempts at resolution were unsuccessful. The Taxpayer Advocate Office acts as a last resort within the Indiana Department of Revenue for taxpayers who need assistance. If specific areas of recurring internal problems or stance on particular tax issues are identified, recommendations are made for internal remedial procedures.

Recommendations for changes in correspondence and billing procedures often originate from the Taxpayer Advocate Office, with emphasis on the taxpayers' needs and keeping the taxpayer viewpoint in mind. The Taxpayer Advocate Office assisted 34,578 taxpayers during the 2000 tax year with its numerous programs.

## **TAXPAYER BILL OF RIGHTS**

### **Public Law 332-1989**

#### **(Special Session)**

### **Indiana Taxpayer Rights and Responsibilities**

All Indiana taxpayers have certain rights and responsibilities that correspond to the Indiana tax laws. The Taxpayer Bill of Rights sets forth these rights and responsibilities for Indiana Taxpayers:

- I      Quality taxpayer service
- II     Taxpayer Advocate to help you in the preservation of your rights
- III    Taxpayer education and information
- IV    A fair collection process
- V     Appointed hearing time and representation
- VI    Demand Notices
- VII   Warrants for collection of tax
- VIII  Judgement liens against property
- IX    Annual Public Hearing and Department Report
- X     Taxpayer responsibilities

The Taxpayer Advocate Office, formerly known as the Problem Resolution Program (PRP), was established in January, 1990. Indiana Code (IC) 6-3-8.1-11-3 provides for a Taxpayer Advocate. The Taxpayer Advocate reports to the Department's Legal Counsel.

Requests may be submitted in writing to: Indiana Department of Revenue, Taxpayer Advocate Office, P.O. Box 6155, Indianapolis, Indiana 46206-6155, or by e-mail to: TaxAdvocate@dor.state.in.us.

### ***Public Affairs***

FY01 was a year of increased outreach to the community with a message of voluntary compliance whenever possible. Staff members worked with many different agencies, providing one-on-one assistance with tax questions, as well as with preparation of tax returns. Feedback from scheduled "focus group" meetings has proven invaluable when it comes to form revision and instructions.

This Office is responsible for the integrating of the legislative changes each year into the over 300 forms that the

Department updates and publishes. The goal always is to make them user-friendly and as simple as possible for the taxpayer to complete. Public Affairs also works closely with software developers to ensure the information gathered on state tax forms reflects the appropriate tax figures and mandatory information needed for processing them.

This area also holds an Annual Tax Conference for Indiana Department of Revenue staff members, emphasizing tax and legislative updates, as well as procedural changes.